

REMARKS OF MR. CASS OF MICHIGAN.

On the Resolution of Mr. Seward, of welcome to Kossuth; delivered in the U.S. Senate, Thursday, Dec. 11, 1851. Mr. President, I shall vote against the amendment of the senator from Georgia, [Mr. BERRIES.] not because the fellow-sufferers of the illustrious Hungarian leader are not worthy of respect and commiseration everywhere, but simply because he comes here as the representative of a great principle, and I do not desire to have our testimonial in its favor weakened by the introduction of other names or topics. We all know the effect of amendment after amendment upon a resolution, and how easily its character and objects are changed by such proceedings. For myself I shall adhere to the purpose we have in view.

Mr. President, I intended to say something upon this subject, and I may as well say it now upon the question before the Senate. This discussion has taken a very wide range—a very discursive range. I shall not follow it in its ramifications, but there are some observations which I wish briefly to offer to the Senate.

Now, with respect to the invitation from Congress to Kossuth, I am not going to enter into any critical analysis of it; I am not going to enter into any philosophical examination of its words. It is idle to say that we invited him as an ordinary emigrant, to come here to enter his one hundred and sixty acres of land and to take up his residence in the forest.

To be sure, the word "emigrants" is used in the original resolution, but our attention was fixed upon the leader and his patriotic band, not because we sought them for the usual purposes of emigration, but because he had been an apostle and had become a martyr of liberty, and we desired to honor the cause, and to honor the man; and we are truly anxious to rescue all these interesting sufferers from the evils of captivity, and the still greater evils impending over them, should Mohammedan power be compelled to yield to Christian menaces. We invited the great leader of a great revolution to come among us; one who had performed a noble part in the history of his country—in the history, indeed, of the human race. It was an imposing procedure on our part. It was, and was intended to be, testimonial from the Congress of the United States to a great man, and a holy cause. Why, it went forth to the world as a homage from a great republic to a principle which is the corner-stone of its own institutions, and was announced in every journal from California to Siberia, wherever an iron despotism has not placed its foot upon the press. It was a most imposing legislative act. The arrival of the vessel we sent on this grateful mission upon the old Homeric waters of the Hellespont was heralded by the announcement of the fact to all the world. And a proud day it was for us, and I trust for human liberty, when these hope-deferred exiles trod the deck of freedom, and found the ensign of a great and free people waving over them. Then, and now till then, were they safe.

And are we now to mar this beautiful page of our history, this tribute to patriotism and freedom, by saying that we merely invited a party of unfortunate Hungarians, as "emigrants," to our shores, and then they have landed, and there we leave them? They came as emigrants, and let them settle as such. And do we seek to prove by a philological examination of the invitation—merely, in fact, it would appear, to please two despotic monarchs—that we meant no honor to Kossuth, none to his companions, none to the cause to which they have devoted themselves? Why, sir, the common instincts of every man revolt against such a perversion. He came under no such circumstances. He came an exile, indeed, but admired and revered wherever liberty has found an abiding-place, or wherever sincere but secret aspirations aye to Heaven for its enjoyment. Such were the condition and claims of Kossuth. I regretted very much to hear upon this floor words of reproach, both against him and the revolution of his country. He needs no eulogy from me. He will find that in the hearts of mankind and in the voice of history. His name will go down to posterity, imprinting his character and principles upon the generation among which his great deeds have been done. Every age of the world is marked by the advent of peculiar individuals, who seem designed by Providence to perform a distinguished part in the concerns of the world. This age is marked by the deeds of Kossuth. Why, sir, there must be some great fascination about this wanderer, without power, without wealth, without a country. Such processions as those that have welcomed his arrival both here and in England have scarcely been seen in the world since the pageants of Roman triumphs. No man can receive such voluntary homage from a free people without possessing some of the highest qualities of our nature. Did he not, his presence would soon dissolve the enchantment, and reduce him to his true dimensions. But enthusiasm seems to increase as he becomes better known, and all join in rendering to him the tribute of admiration.

A good deal has been said about the revolution of Hungary, and a good deal in disparagement of it. I shall not follow these assaults to repeat them. It would be a work of supererogation in this country. I will say, however, that it was a great and noble effort, worthy of the descendants of that band of heroes, who, centuries ago, upon the frontier of Christendom, upheld the banner of the Cross against the standard of the Prophet of Mecca. It is objected here that the Hungarians began their revolution with professions of loyalty to the Austrian crown and of attachment to the Austrian empire; that they asked but little at first, and that they avowed their determination not to be separated from their common country; and all this is brought forward here as a charge and a proof of inconsistency and insincerity. Well, sir, this is almost a chapter taken out of our own revolutionary history—almost a narrative of events and feelings in our own country, connected with the origin and progress of our struggle with England. The resemblance, not to say the identity, is remarkable. What did our revolutionary fathers do? They too, began with declarations of attachment to the English crown and people, and it is a historical truth beyond contradiction, that they did not desire separation, and they at first condemned it as a great evil.

[To be continued.]

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